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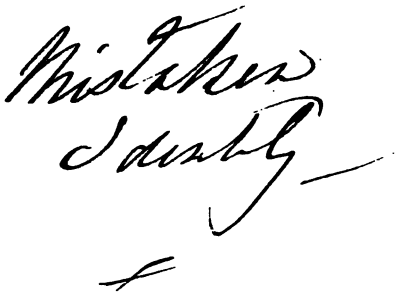

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IN THREE ACTS.

BY STEWART ALEXANDER.

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MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

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CHARACTERS.

ICHABOD EVOMY.
MERRIKIN.
CAPTAIN GILTSPUR.
BELL SAVAGE.
POBJOY.
SOLOMON SMART.
MISS MEANWELL.
ETHEL EVOMY.
DOLLY (ADOPTED BY MR. EVOMY).
STARCH.
MARTHA MANGE.
MARTIN.

SCENE—MR. EVOMY'S HOUSE. PERIOD, 1872.

TIME—THREE DAYS.

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MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A handsomely furnished room. A garden is seen through open French windows at the back. Starch and Martin discovered lounging in easy chairs.*

STARCH. Well, Martin, how do you like yourself in your new place?

MARTIN. Thanks, Mr. Starch, I think it 'ill do; at least, when I get 'em into my way a bit.

STARCH. Ah, that's the job. Pray, Martin, why did you leave your last place?

MARTIN. Well, Mr. Starch, I've been livin' with a young couple just returned from their wedding tower. Before Missis had been home a week, she insulted me grossly. Of course I vowed vengence. So when they sat down to dinner, I stood behind Missis's chair, and made eyes at Master.

STARCH. Ha, ha, ha! Very good!

MARTIN. Well, as I intended, Missis catched sight of me in the looking-glass.

STARCH. Ha, ha, ha! Capital! Egad!

MARTIN. My heyes! there *was* a row! Of course Missis said Master must have encouraged me—which he never did, poor young fellah.

STARCH. Ha, ha, ha!—You set 'em a quarrelling as bad as if they'd been married six months.

MARTIN. That I did, But it was a deal worse the next day. When Missis give me notice I began to blubber, and says I—quite innocent like (*puts her apron to her eyes and imitates*)—Well, I'm sure, Mum, if Master's would keep their places,—servants would do the same—bo—o—ha, ha, ha!

STARCH. Ha, ha, ha! Egad, Martin, you're a gal of intelleck. You beat Susan—and Susan had a real talent for worryin' a Missis.

MARTIN. How come she to leave here?

STARCH. Well, you must know, Susan was a very religious gal: and at her chapel, after the regular meeting, they always had a supplementary service for the extra wicked; but our govnor said he wouldn't have her out so late. Well, she come to me a bustin' with rage,—and says she,—"Mark me! the very next time as they as company—if I don't have one of the hawfullest haccidents as hever was!" Susan was a very truthful gal, so, sure enough, the very next week she dropped twenty pounds worth of glass, and bent it considerable.

MARTIN. Serve 'em right.

STARCH. Well, our govnor says to her, says he,—"'owhever come you to drop all that there glass?"—Well, of course she wasn't going to be talked to like *that* so she give notice.

MARTIN. Quite right, too. What sort of a family is this?

STARCH. Well, of course you see our govnor 'aint a gent?

MARTIN. Oh, yes: I see that immejetly I looked at his bussum: his linen is so dreadful coarse.

STARCH. And very often his langwidge is as coarse as his linen. You see our govnor as had no bringing up; he was kind of dragged up, somehow: he never had no forefathers, no hancestors: in fack, this is what I call a self-sowed family.

MARTIN. A family as rose of itself.

STARCH. Egg-zactly. Our govnor was mixed up in treacle a good deal; when he come out of that he'd made a deal of money. Now he's a gentleman, and perprietor of the biggest pawn shop in Birmingham.

MARTIN. Then he isn't proud.

STARCH. Oh, Lord, no! anything but. He 'aint a bad sort: certainly, he once had the impudence to tell us if we couldn't eat moist sugar we could lump it! but we soon put a hend to his low jokes.

MARTIN. He isn't half so refined as sugar.

STARCH. Good. He's got no blood in him; and after all, blood's heverythink. Of course you know that the blood of the Harrystockracy is blue?

MARTIN. Oh, yes! but common folks' blood is red.

STARCH. Egg-zactly. I once lived with a Dook, who suffered from bleeding at the nose. Well, the blood that come from his grace was perfectly blue—a beautiful blue; in fack I used to bottle it, and use it for blue hink.

MARTIN. Really! But, you see, they can't help it—its herry-dittary.

STARCH. Egg-zactly. Bless you! you'll see through the govnor in half-an-hour.

MARTIN. Oh, yes! A gent's servants is like his 'osses—they soon find out the kind of hand that holds the reins, and take their liberties accordin'—as our coachman used to say.

STARCH. Egg-zactly.

MARTIN. Who's that old lady?

STARCH. Oh, she's Miss Meanwell;—our govnor's sister-in-law—she's one of the "as-been's"; she's old and tarnished—what I call a second-hand beauty. Old Merrikin's her young man. It's no use your'e listening outside the door for what *she* says;—she uses such big words they can't get through the keyhole.

MARTIN. Ethel seems one of the right sort.

STARCH. There you 'ave me. I must say I approve of Ethel: a very nice gal. Her Father wants her to marry Savage; but, 'tween ourselves, I think she's setting her chignon at Giltspur.

MARTIN. Well, I don't wonder; for he's a good looking young chap—and very funny.

STARCH. He's amoosing enough: but his heyes is weak; at night he's obliged to wear specks—that spoils him. Now, Dolly's a niceish gal;

'strawdinary favorite with all the young fellahs. To keep right with her, you've only got to like—or, pretend to like—that damned, dirty little devil of a dog of her's : the young chaps know that.

MARTIN. Where is the dog ? I've not seen it.

STARCH. It's at the doctor's : she's been a-hover stuffin of the cussed little hanamile agin.

MARTIN. Who's that Mr. Smart ?

STARCH. Oh, he's a hauthor as don't wash.

MARTIN. He looks clean enough.

STARCH. Ah ! I mean, his works don't go down with the public : they say, hanybody can write his books—but nobody can read 'em.

MARTIN. Then I 'spose he writes to please himself ?

STARCH. And for the good of the stationery trade. Then there's Pobjoy : I've no opinion of that young man : I'm quite sure he's very pore. Look at his boots !

MARTIN. They shine splendid—don't they :—I noticed 'em pertickeler.

STARCH. A very bad sign, Martin, a very bad sign. When you see a gent with such very shiny boots, you may be quite sure he cleans 'em himself.

MARTIN. That's true enough.

STARCH. Well, Martin, I hope we shall live 'appy together ; and do our dooty ; that is, eat and drink the wittles of three, and do the work of one—ha, ha! Ah ! here comes the doctor ! 'ow do, doctor.

[*Enter* MRS. MANGE.

MRS. M. Morning, Mr. Starch. Lord ! how I sweat !

STARCH. Ahem ! I'll thank you to be a little more genteel in your hexpressions. We don't know what sweat is, 'ere.

MRS. M. No offence, Mr. Starch : but I've got such a dreadful hinfluential cold on me—that I *do* sweat, that's all.

STARCH (*aside*). Scissors !

MRS. M. Strangers, Mr. Starch ?

STARCH. Ya–as: a noo fellah-servant, doctor. Miss Martin, Dr. Mange—the celebrated cat and dog doctor of these parts. (MRS. M. *curtseys*, MARTIN *gives a half nod*).

MRS. M. Mr. Starch, I'm sure she's a hornament to the perfession you adorns.

STARCH. Egg–zactly.

MRS. M. (*to* MARTIN) Don't you overwork yourself, my dear.

MARTIN. No, mum, I don't intend.

MRS. M. I did; and now I 'as my reward. Mr. Starch can tell you how I suffers from flattery in the hinside :—and I've got dropsy, too, my dear. In fact, Mr. Starch, I'm nothing but wind and water, sir. I'm sure, my dear, I hoften sit up in bed for *h*ours, and pray the Lord to take me. But there, Mr. Starch, it's no use a-wittling, what is, is—'Eaven be praised!

STARCH. It must be very onpleasant. But now, if *hi* was you—I should go and 'ave me hinside hanalyzed.

MRS. M. Well, to be sure, Mr. Starch, I never thought of that, sir :—I will. (*aside*) What the dooce does he mean? Oh, he *his* so clever.

STARCH. 'Spose you've brought Dolly's pup back?

MRS. M. Yes, 'ere he is. (*takes a toy terrier out of basket*) Restored to his 'ealth and his friends.

STARCH. Martin, you'd better run and tell Dolly. [*Exit* MARTIN. How the juce do you cure the little beast?

MRS. M. Well, 'tween ourselves—I gives him a bit o' dry bread every hother day, and whollops him round a hempty room. The wholloping repeated hevery two hours as before. He's the nastiest, dirtiest little varmint as ever——(*curtseys*).

[*Enter* DOLLY *followed by* POBJOY *and* SMART.

[*Exit* STARCH.

DOLLY. Where's my darling! oh! (*seizes dog, and covers him with kisses*) My precious! my sweet love! (*kisses him again, and again*).

SMART (*aside to* POBJOY). Here stands a superior animal, waiting and willing to be hugged!

DOLLY. Did they take him fron his Aunty-waunty—it was a shame—poor ittle sing!—what was the the matter with him, doctor?

MRS. M. He'd got the pupses order, Miss.

DOLLY. The what?

POBJOY. You mean, the pup's disorder?

MRS. M. Yes, sir. They call it the Temperance up in town, Miss.

DOLLY. Oh, I hope you did'nt give him any physic? I know he does'nt like it.

MRS. M. Not a drop, Miss. He's had nothing but habstaining and hexercise; and 'erbs—very expensive 'erbs. I never thought I should get him through, Miss. When he come to me, I would'nt ha' been his inside for toppence. The nights I've sat up a-nursing of that dog! the tears I've shed hover him! but I felt for him so in my little 'ome—after he's being used to this big house. He was just like a fallen gentleman, Miss. Many's the time I've lit the fire in the best parlour—a-purpose for him to go and sit in it: and there he'd sit all day, a-sleeping and a-dreaming of you, Miss. Oh! he's like his Missis—he's—a little hangel, that he is!

SMART. }
POBJOY. } Here, here!

DOLLY. I'm sure I love you very much for being so good to him. Bless him! (*hugs dog again*).

SMART. I see, doctor, there's a deal of poetry in you.

MRS. M. Ha, ha, ha!—oh, what a Mr. Smart you are, sir! ha, ha, ha! 'Scuse me laughing, Miss, but just fancy there being a deal of verses in an old 'omen like me!

SMART. I'm not joking. Poetry is found in men and women, as well as in books.

MRS. M. (*with awe*) Is it hindeed! well, now I daresay it's that as gives me the wind on the stomach so hawful. But there, Miss, it's no use a-wittling, what is, is,—'Eaven be praised! I wish you good day, Miss.

DOLLY. Good bye!—go into the kitchen and have what you like.

MRS. M. Thank you kindly, Miss. Good day, Miss, good day, sir, good day. (*curtseys all round, and Exit*).

DOLLY (*to dog*). Oh, Ti-ti, I'm so glad you've come, your poor Auntie has had no one to love her!

SMART. Oh, Miss Dolly; dont say that.

POBJOY. No, p'ease don't.

DOLLY. Oh, it's quite true, Ti! they don't care for me in the least—hard-hearted wretches. (*kisses dog again*)

SMART (*aside*). Oh, it's disgusting,—beastly?

POBJOY (*aside*). I'd give my soul and chance of heaven to be that dog.

DOLLY. Ti! how ill you look! oh, I'm sure he'll be sick! take him, Smart! quickly! (*thrusts dog into his arms*) he's going to be sick!

SMART. What! going to be ill; with pleasure! (*aside*) a new coat, too.

DOLLY. Run and put him in his bed, and rock the cradle till he sleeps, please.

SMART. With pleasure. (*aside*) You infernal little beast!

[*Exit.*

POBJOY. Miss Dolly, why didn't you command me? I don't think he he cares for the job.

DOLLY. Some people are never satisfied: I sent him off, that I might have a chat with you.

POBJOY. Oh, you are kind! (*a pause*) Did—did you receive my note?

DOLLY. Yes, I did.

POBJOY. And—and may I hope for a favourable answer?

DOLLY. Well, Mr. Pobjoy, I—I hardly know what to say. You have taken me so by surprise. I never thought about marriage, or love, or anything of that sort; that I—I;——have you any Bronchial Trochas with you?

POBJOY (*feeling in all his pockets*). I—I'm pained to say, I have not. I'm awfully sorry.

DOLLY. Don't let it distress you.

POBJOY. Miss Dolly, I know why you won't have me: because I'm in that beastly chemist's shop?

DOLLY. Oh, no, that is not the reason.

POBJOY. Then, I wish you'd call and see me more often. Do come once a week, and have a Seidlitz powder?

DOLLY. The last time I called you put a quantity of vermin poison into some cough mixture, and nearly killed an old woman.

POBJOY. Yes, but you know, you made me so joyfully nervous, I —I—

DOLLY. Then it was *my* fault. Well, if I cannot go into a shop without poisoning a fellow creature, I *must* keep away.

POBJOY. If you'll only come, I'll be more careful; and I'll give you such a big packet of sweets.

DOLLY. Thanks. You see, when you practice for yourself, you will have no private fortune; so that, come a healthy season, we should starve.

POBJOY. Oh, but, please God, we never shall have a healthy season. There is sure to be cholera, or scarlet-fever, or something.

DOLLY. Do you think you and I could live comfortably on scarlet-fever?

POBJOY. Certainly. If I only had three patients, that would be seven-and-sixpence a day, at the very least: and then, by judicious mixing of the medicine, I could keep them ill till I got some more.

DOLLY. Yes, and I might invent a patent pill for young ladies; warranted to contain nothing but sugar. I think that would sell?

POBJOY. Capital! ha, ha! (*aside*) She'll have me.

DOLLY. But I dont like the profession. I couldn't bear to be woke every hour by the ringing of the "Night Bell."

POBJOY. Oh, but I'd only have patients who'd promise to be ill in the day. I'd make that a *sine quâ non*.

DOLLY. I've heard Dr. Lancet say that he's called up night after night, and never gets a farthing for it.

POBJOY. Then, Lancet is not half sharp. (*aside*) He should have cash on delivery! (*To her*) Joking apart, if you will have me, I'll give up the profession.

DOLLY. What! and do nothing, with nothing to do it on!

POBJOY. Oh, I'd soon get the managership of some Bank, or be a work-partner in some large factory: at any-rate, I will "throw physic to the dogs."

DOLLY. Then, as a lover of dogs, I beseech you to keep to your profession. Poor dogs! how cruel of you, Mr. Pobjoy. I'm sure Mr. Smart would never say such a thing.

POBJOY. (*piqued*) Umph! that is your mistake; Smart hates dogs.

DOLLY. What!

POBJOY. I don't wish to set you against him, but its quite true.

DOLLY. You don't mean it?

POBJOY. I do. I've heard him say the most disrespectful things of your pet.

DOLLY. You've heard him speak against my duck, Ti?

POBJOY. Yes, he often calls the sweet little creature, Miss Dolly's four legged duck! I hate such illnature.

DOLLY. Oh, why did you not tell me this before? How could you see me place my life in the arms of such a monster? Let me go to my sweet! oh, you are not my friend. [*Exit.*

POBJOY. (*rubbing his hands*) Whether she has me or not, I've smashed up Smart's chance; that's something. Sweet little creature! ha, ha! damned little beast! [*Exit.*

[*Enter* MISS MEANWELL, *and* MERRIKIN.

MISS M. Well, I call Giltspur painfully handsome:—his manners are as polished as his boots, and he shines in a drawing-room like patent leather.

MERRIK. All very fine! but, in my opinion, such sentiments do not become a woman at your size of life.

MISS M. Ah, well! you cannot put an old head on to young shoulders, as aunt George used to say.

MERRIK. Ahem! young shoulders! people like Giltspur till they know him: those who know him best, like him least: he's a gay young spark, but nothing more.

MISS M. Well, there never was a flame without a spark ! (*sighs*)

MERRIK. (*angrily*) Madam, if your word is good for anything, you are engaged to me ?

MISS M. (*quietly*) Not every lover becomes a bridegroom.

MERRIK. Very well, madam ! very well ! as you please. I am free, thank God. But, madam, permit me to say, that all honest people will despise you ; they will point at you as a woman who makes love to every male she meets—a woman who does unto all men as she would they would do unto her ! good morning. (*going*)

MISS M. Ha, ha, ha ! very good ! capital ! ha, ha, ha !

MERRIK. What ? charming creature ! you are jesting ? (*takes her hand*)

MISS M. Yes, and by my love for you, I am ! how did I act the fool ? is it true ?

MERRIK. Like your natural self, it was perfection. But my sweet charmer, why this deception ?

MISS M. I will tell you. I have long suspected Ethel of loving the fascinating, but rakish, Giltspur.

MERRIK. You astonish me ! how do you know it ?

MISS M. She never looks at him—she seldom speaks to him—she cannot trust herself to enquire of any third person concerning him : these tell me she loves him. I cannot convince her that he is a rake, so have determined to resort to strategem.

MERRIK. Strategem ! umph ?

MISS M. Giltspur's debts are large ; so, in his eyes, Ethel's true worth is her money's value. Now, my fortune being larger than her's, I am convinced he would marry me—if he had the chance.

MERRIK. Good gracious !—don't talk so, pray.

MISS M. I intend to make Giltspur imagine I love him.

MERRIK. Good heavens ! Betsey, you send all the blood to my head.

MISS M. With my fortune for the bait, he will swallow the hook—that's me.

MERRIK. May you choke him !

MISS M. Now, listen! when I have proved his sole aim is money,—I shall jilt him.

MERRIK. Jilt him!—whew! come, I see, I see. A splendid plot to ruin a bad young man.

MISS M. I shall want your aid.

MERRIK. With pleasure! I hate the man! (*aside*) He's always making a butt of me for his horrid wit!

MISS M. There is something else: You know, Evomy wants Ethel to marry Savage?

MERRIK. Yes, you told me so.

MISS M. Now, I wish to bring that match about.

MERRIK. I see! kill two birds with one barrel! we'll see what can be done:—anything for the good of the young people.——Ah! I hear Evomy coming; I'll be off! good bye! adieu! [*Exit.*

Enter EVOMY *and* ETHEL. EVOMY *carries a bundle of papers, and is carelessly dressed.*

EVOMY. Bills, bills, nothing but bills! my soul and my body; I wish Christmas was at——

ETHEL (*putting her hand over his mouth*). Say Midsummer.

EVOMY. Say what you please,—but I hope Christmas will never come but once a year so long as I live. (*takes out a very long bill*) Look here, Miss Ethel! (*reads*) "Ichabod Evomy, Esquire," what the devil do they want to Esquire me for? "Ichabod Evomy, Esquire, debted to Madam Trinket." Dress after dress—costume after costume! shocking! I dare not look at the amount. Why, you are as extravagant as Queen Elizabeth.

ETHEL. But I'm sure Queen Elizabeth's dear papa never made a noise when the bills came in.

EVOMY. And, what is more to the point, Her Majesty never got a husband: that will be your fate.

ETHEL. Oh, Papa!

EVOMY. Verily, the road to ruin upon which women travel, is hung with silks and satins, and planted with artificial flowers. But the men are

quite as bad. Look at Giltspur; up to his ears in debt, and yet he dresses in the very height of fashion. (ETHEL *takes a book and appears to read*)

MISS M. I quite agree with you, Ichabod. I think it's dreadful, as Aunt George used to say.

EVOMY. When a person outruns the Constable, the second man wins. I don't like Giltspur, Betsey: I wish you would not encourage him to come here.

MISS M. Law, Ichabod! I'm sure I don't

EVOMY. To see him enter a room is a sight! so, (*mimics*) as if he were walking on looking-glass. Ba-ah! I like to see a man go a-head with energy, as if he were always late for a train. He is such a fop! if he had the chance to pick up money, he couldn't, for fear of splitting his beautiful coat.

ETHEL. It is possible to stoop too low to pick up money.

EVOMY. My child, be humble: remember, you are only a pawnbroker's daughter. And, Betsey, that beautiful walking cane; and those sweet gloves, at three half-crowns a pair! Now, I must say, I have a sincere dislike for a man who wears gloves.

ETHEL. I'm sure you would not say so, if you were a glover.

EVOMY. I never knew a man make a fortune who wore gloves. Can anybody count money in gloves? Ethel! never you fall in love with a man who wears gloves.

MISS M. To my mind, the worst of Giltspur, is that horrid beard.

EVOMY. Disgusting!—No man who wears a beard shall ever have the hand of my daughter. Oh, I told Giltspur so; I made no secret of my dislikes. Now, Savage *is* a man: there's none of this infernal nonsense about him—eh, Ethel?

ETHEL. It may be my want of appreciation—but I call him a Donkey-engine.

EVOMY. A Donkey-engine! why so, Miss Pert?

ETHEL. Because he's so strong, and so stupid.

EVOMY. You put the Engine before the Donkey. But I strongly advise you to bring yourself thoroughly acquainted with the nature and property of the donkey-engine, for I shall most likely appoint you keeper thereof—you understand ? (*looks over bill.*)

MISS M. For my part I would much rather marry an honest yeoman, than a dissipated Captain, covered with lace and dishonour.

EVOMY (*starting*). My soul and my body! awful! I dare not tell you the sum total! (*aside*) not half so much as I expected. Ethel! if ever I see such a bill again, it will take three men to hold me. Umph—yes, Betsey, I think I'll shew this bill to Captain Giltspur : or, stay—a very good idea! I'll go nail it on the gate, then no young man will dare to enter here. (*aside*) Ha, ha! I'll tease the puss! [*Exit.*

(ETHEL *bursts into tears.*)

MISS M. My dear! your father is only laughing at you! why you are as sensitive as mercury!

ETHEL. Well, it—it,—(*sob*)—it's too bad! he—he—(*sob*)—he knows I hate being laughed at, as—(*sob*)—as much as a child! (*laughing through her tears*) ha, ha, ha! but it's too bad, really!

MISS M. I'll be plain with you, Ethel. It is not all fun on your father's part : he, thinks Giltspur wants to have you.

ETHEL. Aunt!

MISS M. Oh, I quite agree with him. Giltspur considers himself much above us, and, no doubt, he is ; but I fancy he'll try and pocket his pride, along with your fortune.

ETHEL. How absurd! how can you!

MISS M. My dear child, beware of this man, in fact, beware of all military men ; with women of our rank, they flirt and flirt, but there they halt : our money they love, ourselves they despise. Look upon a scarlet uniform as a danger signal, which, when you see approaching, run another way. I'm sure I hope Giltspur will never come near the place again.

[*Enter* STARCH.

STARCH. Captain Giltspur, mum.

[*Enter* GILTSPUR.

MISS M. (*rising*) Ah, Captain! I'm so glad to see you! (*they exchange the usual greetings*) But, bless me! (*staring hard at him*) why—Captain, excuse my rudeness, but really I hardly know you.

GILT. I dare say not. You see I have shaved off my beard; I found it so unpleasantly hot: and these clothes are very loose and cool; much more comfortable than those tight things.

MISS M. I can quiet believe it. Pray what is the news in town?

GILT. Well, there is nothing particular. Oh, yes, by-the-bye! old General Lobster is to marry the young and beautiful Miss Ann Chovy.

ETHEL. What a shame!

GILT. Yes, I fear they will split upon the rock of ages.

MISS M. Oh, bless you,—women don't look at ages in men—only in each other.

ETHEL. Speak for yourself, Aunt. I think it shocking! the General has long had one leg in the grave.

MISS M. Ethel, how can you! What is the General's age?

GILT. Miss Chovy's friends say he is forty, but her enemies declare him to be seventy—so I conclude he is about fifty-five. (*They laugh.*)

MISS M. Oh, you are too bad!

GILT. After all, marriage for money is natural, but marriage for love is divine.

MISS M. Money does not make happiness.

GILT. But the want of it makes misery.

ETHEL. We have been trying to read Mr. Smart's Novel; and we are shocked at the dreadful things he says about us women.

MISS M. I hope, Captain, you think better of the ladies?

GILT. Oh! I adore the ladies!—in fact, I am so convinced of the angelic nature of the sex, that I firmly believe when a *good* man dies, he becomes a woman.

MISS M. I fear you seek to make yourself agreeable at the expense of *truth.*

GILT. Oh dear, no! I only wish to share my gallantry between Mars and Venus.

MISS M. Then what do you say to Mr. Smart's views on matrimony?

GILT. They are fashionable but detestable.—(*Looking at Ethel.*)—I am quite sure that to gain the affection of a pure and lovely girl is the noblest ambition a man can have; and, when accomplished, it must ever be his proudest boast.

MISS M. Oh, really, you make us blush! pray go and say some of these fine things to Dolly; you'll find her in the garden.

GILT. Thank you, I wish particularly to see that young lady. (*aside*) I promised Smart I would urge his suit with her. Ladies, your most obedient. (*Exit through window.*)

MISS M. What a change! No beard, no beautiful clothes, no gloves! What can be his motive? surely not to gain your *father's* love?

ETHEL. Not knowing, cannot say; not feeling at all interested, don't care.

MISS M. How sad it is that he should be so wild!

ETHEL. Wild: certainly he is not at all tame.

MISS M. Unless tameness consists in spending a small fortune on wine, women, and billiards.

ETHEL. I beg your pardon, Captain Giltspur seldom or never plays billiards: he only plays pool, and at that he generally wins.

MISS M. Which is no excuse, as aunt George used to say. Any fool can play pool if he's only fool enough to play pool enough. (*a pause.*) Ethel, you love this man. (*a pause.*)

ETHEL. (*rises slowly and sternly*) I do. I love him! rail at me, I am prepared. You try to turn me from him, but you cannot! Do not attempt it any more; or, much as I love you, I shall hate you soon. Your little eyes can see no good in him, you run him down for a sinner; but he is better than many saints. He is a man and gentle. If he were walking St. James's with a Duke, yet would he stop to raise and cheer a dirty fallen brat; and though he were starving yet would he share his last loaf with his greatest enemy: I love him!

[*Miss M. rises and attempts to speak, but is overcome with emotion. Exit.*

[*Enter Savage angrily.*

SAVAGE. Devil take him! *(sees her)* Ethel.

ETHEL. What is the matter?

SAVAGE. A great deal. *(aside.)* To think she should take-up with this manslaughtering-red-coated devil of a captain.

ETHEL *(aside)*. Papa has sent him to me: oh, dear, I know what is coming! *(Walks towards door)*.

SAVAGE. Ethel! stay a moment, please. *(Goes to her)*. I wish to speak to you.

ETHEL *(getting confused)*. Oh!—I—I—not now, please! I—another time! I'm in haste!

SAVAGE. I shall not detain you very long. *(Leads her to a seat. A pause)*. You—you know Giltspur? *(A pause)*. Don't you call him a great ass?

ETHEL. I call no man such, unless he has four legs and a tail.

SAVAGE. I'm not in a joking mood—far from it. I will be plain with you. Ethel! if Giltspur marries Dolly, I'll sit in the condemned pew for the pair of 'em! I will—so help me——

ETHEL *(with horror)*. What! Impossible!

SAVAGE. Oh! it's more than possible—it's highly probable. I cannot trust myself to tell you what I have just seen and heard. I thought Dolly had more good sense: but girls are just like bulls;—they'll run after scarlet cloth if it's hanging on a mop's-tail! *(A pause)*.

ETHEL. What can he admire in her?

SAVAGE. That's good! you mean, what can she admire in him! Dolly is as nice a little girl as ever went on a bit o' leather!

ETHEL. He wants money: she has no fortune but her face.

SAVAGE. And a very pretty fortune, too!

ETHEL. He is of a high family: she was born in a workhouse.

SAVAGE. And he'll die in one, with his extravagance. She gave me every encouragement: for months she would only allow me to peel her walnuts: and it was just the same all last orange season. *(Begins to blubber)*.

ETHEL (*musing.*) They flirt and flirt, but there they halt.

SAVAGE. Oh, it will shrink me to a skeleton!

ETHEL. I do not believe it.

SAVAGE (*comes down from window.*) Hush! not a word! (*leads her inside.* GILTSPUR *and* DOLLY *appear in front of window, arm-in-arm.*)

DOLLY. Stay a moment: (*they stop*) let me pin this flower in your coat.

GILT. Come, cannot you give me a more definite answer?

DOLLY. Oh, I really don't know what to say: (*they walk on*) I'm much too young to marry. (*they pass out of sight.* SAVAGE *and* ETHEL *gaze after them with looks of hatred.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same as Act I.*

[ETHEL *discovered.*

ETHEL. After all, it is Dolly he really loves. Loves, said I!—save the mark! To gratify his vanity, he seeks to make her unhappy. Oh, what a base, inconstant man! Aunt is right in what she said—and I was wrong:—and yet—and yet I love him!

[*Enter* GILTSPUR.

GILT. Miss Hvomy, I have to thank you for the charming portrait of your charming self, received this morning.

ETHEL. You are welcome to it, sir.

GILT (*aside.*) How cold her manner is. (*to her*) I placed it facing one of my own; so that—(*assuming bashfulness*)—so that, when the book is closed, we kiss each other—pardon the liberty!

ETHEL. (*aside*) Oh, that, when the book is open, we might do the same! Flattering trifler! (*to him*) Then, sir, I beg you'll turn my picture.

GILT. Ethel!——

ETHEL. You are very free, sir!

GILT. I ask your pardon. I thought our friendship——

ETHEL. Our acquaintance.

GILT. You pain me. I hoped your friendship was more freely granted.

ETHEL. You were wrong, sir. (*aside*) I could bite my tongue for speaking thus!

GILT. Believe me, I do not undervalue the honour:—Indeed, I have made great sacrifices to obtain it.

ETHEL. I beg you'll name them.

GILT. To enjoy the pleasure of your society, and in the hope of gaining your friendship, I left off wearing clothes——

ETHEL. Sir!

GILT. And donned these slops:—no slight effort, madam, for a man religiously brought up. Again, my beard—for which I waited patiently for twenty-five long years—has fallen in the same cause. A few weeks ago, I would not have parted with that beard—no! not if by so doing I could have transformed myself into a Venus! Yes these slops —this clean-shorn chin—these gloveless hands—all tell my eagerness to gain your friendship! You deny me this boon:—you must be right—for you never can be wrong:—but since it is so, I, of course, am free to think what I like—to say what I think—and to dress as I please. (*Takes out a pair of gloves, and puts them on*).

ETHEL (*aside.*) He loves me! oh! if I am half as happy when I get to Heaven, I shall be satisfied!

GILT (*aside.*) She loves me;—or never maid loved man before! (*aloud*) oh, Ethel!——

ETHEL. Sir:—again!

GILT (*aside.*) Curse this continual coal-hauling! (*to her drily*) I'm sorry I called you by your name. It was not *I* who spoke—but Nature;—who, in the most cautious, will sometimes think aloud:— (*passionately*)—but you are so good—so beautiful—so true—that, since I have known you, it has been the ambition of my life to call you Ethel —friend—and wife! (*a pause*).

ETHEL (*runs to him.*) Here comes Papa!—for goodness sake, don't let him see your gloves!

GILT. What!

ETHEL. Papa! off with them! quickly!

GILT (*tugging at his gloves.*) Oh, dash it! hang it! damn Dent!

[*Enter* EVOMY: GILTSPUR *thrusts his hands into his trousers pockets and looks at picture on the wall.*

ETHEL (*aside.*) How my heart beats!

GILT. Yes, Miss Evomy, it is a very nice picture: very well done,

EVOMY. What! Captain Giltspur! bless me! (*aside*) what a fright!

GILT. Ah! Mr. Evomy! you stare at me like this picture! no wonder! the fact is, sir, your remarks upon the folly of dress made me quite unhappy; they haunted me all day—like an onion eaten at breakfast time: at last, I called a cab, drove to Hyam's, purchased this thirty-shilling suit, and have been happy ever since. I hope you like it.

EVOMY. You should not have called a cab, you should have walked, or not have gone beyond a "bus." Men who "call cabs" don't make fortunes.

GILT. So I've heard those fellows say who stand outside the theatres with brandy-bottle lables round their necks. To tell the truth, I did go in a "bus": but, you know, people who never ride in ought else—always "call a cab" in conversation.

EVOMY. A sham, sir: down with it!

GILT. With all my heart! but while we are on earth, we must do as earth does; when we get to heaven, we'll behave like gentlemen.

EVOMY. Well, sir, this change in your dress proves you to have a good heart and a sound head; I see you are not offended at honest remonstrance. Now, sir, you will pass for a man; before, you were nothing but a dressed-up block; only fit for silly girls to bow to, or to stand in a tailor's shop window. Captain I'm very much pleased:—give me your hand! (*offers his*).

ETHEL (*aside.*) How unfortunate! what will he do!

GILT (*getting confused.*) Oh! yes! I—I—glad you like 'em, sir! they are very nice! I'm delighted! splendid! beautiful! I—

EVOMY. Yes, sir! come, shake hands?

GILT. With pleasure, sir! (*turns away*) with pleasnre!—most happy to! so cool!—so comfortable!—I—

EVOMY. Allow me to speak. Pray, shake hands.

GILT. Oh! shake hands!—which do you mean?—me shake your hand—or you shake mine?—cool!—so comfortable—so *very* pleasant!—I—I—yes——

EVOMY. Allow me a word! sir, you've not yet done me the honour of shaking hands.

GILT. Ha, ha, ha! you really mean, shake hands? very good! excellent, my dear sir! good morning!—so—(*going*)—so cool.

EVOMY. (*stopping him*) Allow me to speak? Sir, I insist upon your shaking hands! (Giltspur *takes his right hand out of his pocket very slowly, looking straight into* Evomy's *face.*) As I expected—gloves again! sir, you have attempted to deceive me: you have not been straightforward in this matter: you have forfeited all claim to my regard. I am disgusted. (GILTSPUR *takes out his handkerchief, and in so doing pulls ont a satin shoe*) What is that, sir?

ETHEL. Oh, Papa, it is only my shoe! (*picks it up*).

EVOMY. Your shoe, Miss!—how the devil did you come by that shoe, sir,—I pause for a reply.

GILT. Sir! sir,—I—I—I—I———

EVOMY. Did you give this man your shoe?

ETHEL. No, Papa!—but—but—but—but———

EVOMY. But! but! but! and I! I! I!—that's a nice explanation! go to your room, Miss!—do you hear me?—go to your room! [*Exit* ETHEL. Now, sir, how did you come by that shoe? I pause for an explanation.

GILT. Sir—I—I really—I'm sure—I—I hope—sir—I—I know—sir—I—I—I———

EVOMY. Most satisfactory! So, sir, you go to people's houses—partake of their hospitality, and steal the shoes.

GILT. Sir! retract that expression!

EVOMY. Pooh! bounce won't do here! I consider it a most providential thing, that you wanted to blow your nose at that particular moment. What *are* you?

GILT. I'm a gentleman!

EVOMY. Then I thank God I'm not. Gentleman! get out of my house, and go to the devil!

GILT. I decline to go to any place where I *know* I shall meet you.

EVOMY. You're a swell-nobsman! If you don't go, I'll kick you out!

GILT. Don't kick, save your old shoes. If you'll put the gloves on, just for once, we'll have a bout. I only wanted the loan of that shoe; you

should have had it back:—when I got to Birmingham, I intended to pawn it!

EVOMY. If you're not off in two two's——— [*Exit.*

GILT. He's gone to fetch the fire-engine to put me out! stupid old fool! he won't let me explain. (*Goes out through window, leaving his hat behind*).

[*Enter* EVOMY, *followed by two* SERVANTS.

EVOMY. Now then! (*aside*) gone! umph! (*to them*) order the Brougham round.

1ST. SERVT. Yes, sir! (*aside*) he's cracked!

EVOMY. Stay! kick this hat out at the front door! (*give* GILTSPUR'S *hat to* SERVANT)

2ND. SERVT. Yes, sir. (*aside*) he's off his chump! [*Exeunt Omnes.*

[*Enter* DOLLY *and* SMART.

DOLLY. Smart—I mean, Mr. Smart, can you flirt?

SMART. No, Dolly—I mean, Miss Dolly, I don't know how. I wish I did. It must be such a nice amusement for young people in winter evenings.

DOLLY. It's a very selfish game; only two can play at it.

SMART. I wish some fellow would set-up as a Professor of flirting, and give private lessons at so much per annum.

DOLLY. I'll tell you what: I'll try to teach you.

SMART. Oh, thank you! but it's too bad of you to be so good.

DOLLY First of all, you must learn to make eyes.

SMART Real eyes?

DOLLY. Yes.

SMART. Shall I have to learn to make noses, and mouths?

DOLLY. No! in flirting, only ladies make mouths; but that's quite the last. Let me see how you get on alone. Now come, make an advance. (*walks away.*)

SMART. Eh—what—make an advance! I don't understand.

DOLLY. Come, don't be silly! you are wasting so much time!

SMART. If you'll say what you wish me to say, I'll say it.

DOLLY. Oh, dear! I'm afraid you've no natural ability for the art. Attention! eyes right! at the word one, you look sly with your eyes; at the word two, you shew your teeth a little—if they are good: at the word three, you screw your cheeks into a soft smile. Now then! one! two! three! (*gives a scream*) dreadful! horrible! that's not making eyes! that's making faces!

SMART (*depressed*). Ah! it's of no use! I can't do it! flirts are born, not made.

DOLLY. Weren't *you* born? What sort of a man is Mr. Pobjoy?

SMART. Oh, Pobjoy; oh, he's not a bad sort of fellow; of course he has his faults, you know.

DOLLY. What *are* his faults?

SMART. Oh, I don't know. Certainly, there is *one* thing about him which I do *not* like.

DOLLY. What is that?

SMART. Well, of course I don't want to set you against Pobjoy; but between ourselves, he can't bear dogs.

DOLLY. Is that a fact?

SMART. Oh, yes. I advise you not to trust your sweet little pet too much with him: if you do, he'll pinch it's tail; I just give you the hint.

DOLLY. Mr. Smart, you astonish me!

SMART. He says the most dreadful things about that darling little creature: he says, "You think men were made for dogs—not dogs for men."

DOLLY. I'm shocked! indeed, you have opened my eyes. (*Aside*) That he has! I must go to my darling, or he may be killed by this time.

[*Exit.*

SMART. Good! good! good again! Pobjoy was getting too great in that quarter: that will finish him off! ha, ha! well done, Solomon. (*Takes out a book*).

[*Enter* SAVAGE.

Savage, do you like Lamb's Tales?

SAVAGE. I never tasted 'em.

SMART. I mean Charles Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare.

SAVAGE. I know nothing of books: when I left school, I made a bonfire of mine. Dolly's the girl for books: she's very fond of Poetry: I've just bought her a book full: what do you think of it? (*hands him book*).

SMART (*opening book*). Don Juan! You musn't give it to Miss Dolly.

SAVAGE. Why not? The shopman said it was reckoned a first-rate poetry book.

SMART. Don Juan was not a very proper man:—he was a sort of unmarried Mormon. Thus, you see, when a man writes an impure work, he digs his own grave.

SAVAGE. Stop! You're going too deep for me!

SMART. Talking of books, I want to put you in a Novel: may I?

SAVAGE. What should you say about me?

SMART. You'd be the Squire with more heart than brains, and more money than either.

SAVAGE. Good.

SMART. You'd be very fond of pigs, and always in the saddle.

SAVAGE. You might say I almost live upon horseflesh!

SMART. Good. In the second volume I shall want you to commit bigamy, and in the third volume, murder.

SAVAGE. I don't object. Shall I be in love?

SMART. With one of the prettiest girls in the book.

SAVAGE. I don't object. What's her name? I'm not going to be in love with a pretty girl with an ugly name—in a book or out of one.

SMART. You shall name her yourself.

SAVAGE. That's fair. What shall I call her? Jemima is a name that sounds well in a crowd. Sally, Polly, Judy, Ethel. Ethel's a pretty name; I choose that.

SMART. Ethel it shall be.

SAVAGE. Now you might tell me something about the plot.

[*Enter* GILTSPUR *at back.*

SMART. Well, you are in love with Miss Ethel—and Miss Ethel is in love with you.

SAVAGE. That's right enough.

GILT. (*aside*). What! (*Listens at back.*)

SMART. But, Mr. Savage, there is another man also in love with Miss Ethel.

SAVAGE. The devil there is! Who is he?

SMART. Well, he's an Army man.

SAVAGE. A soldier in love with my sweetheart Ethel! that's dooced awkward! Is he another of your friends?

SMART. Perhaps he is.

SAVAGE. Now I'll lay a wager it's Giltspur.

SMART. Ha, ha! You've guessed it! (*Exit.*)

SAVAGE (*calling after him*). Let me give him a good hiding! Do you hear? A thrashing.

GILT. (*coming forward*). Ahem! (*Savage turns.*)

SAVAGE (*after looking at him some moments in mute astonishment*). Talk of the devil he's sure to appear!

GILT. That is quite a mistake: the devil is the only person who *never* appears when he is talked of. So we are rivals. Well, I suppose in these cases he is considered the favoured man who marries the lady. Candidly, I do not wish to solve that knotty point by an appeal to physical force, neither can I consent to the more peaceful but equally vulgar method of tossing-up. Indeed, there is no cause for it. Circumstances compel me to leave here at once, and for ever. You will, therefore, have the field to yourself. Permit me to wish you happy. Good afternoon. (*Exit.*)

[SAVAGE *stares after him with open mouth.*

[*Enter* ETHEL.

ETHEL. Bell! Bell! what is the matter?

SAVAGE. Giltspur is an angel! an angel in boots and breeches!

ETHEL *(joyfully.)* What! oh! I know the cause of this sudden change in your opinions! you have discovered he does *not* love Dolly: I told you so!

SAVAGE. He *does* love Dolly.

ETHEL. He—he loves her?

SAVAGE. Yes, he has this instant told me so. And he has behaved like a gentleman: that he may not cause me any annoyance, he has left here, and has promised never to return; aren't you glad? eh?—speak! aren't you glad?

ETHEL (*with great effort.*) Very!

SAVAGE. Say what you like, Ethel, but, after all, he's a man worth having! Why didn't you fall in love with him? why didn't you make him fall in love with you? If he has shewn a little vice, he'll go quiet enough when he gets into double harness! You and he would trot well together! oh! why didn't you love him! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Fol-de-rol-la! &c.

[*Exit singing.*

[ETHEL *sinks into a chair.*

[*Scene closes.*

SCENE II.—*A shrubbery. Night coming on.*

[*Enter* GILTSPUR, *wearing a cap.*

GILT. And here! this dear delightful spot! How often have we sat upon that bench to watch the sunset, and listen to the cuckoo; To think those happy moments are for ever gone, and that I may never see this place again; or not till age has blunted this cruel stroke. Perhaps, when I am old, I shall bring a loving wife to this sweet spot; and, may be, she will sit upon this very seat and listen to me while I tell of my old love. For surely there must be *one* woman in this great world for me; only I have not found her yet. Come, come! I will cheer up and waste no time, but go at once and seek the world for her. My future love! my wife that is to be!—who 'ere thou art, wherever thou mays't be, come thou to meet me! Let not the fates keep us apart, but bring *thy gentle* voice and loving eyes to bind my wounded heart, which is so

full of love for thee! (*looks at his watch*) Curse me! I've been fooling about here for two hours. I *must* go! This is her favourite walk, and this her favourite hour for walking here. I must not stay, or I may have to look upon a sweet delicious fruit I may not pluck. I will go. Yet how I long to look upon her once again! No, no! it must not be! I *must* go! I will! (*sits on bench.*) My eyes get painful in the night air: doctors must be obeyed. (*puts on a pair of green glasses.*) Now I must be off! She's very late to night. I think I'd better wait till it gets a little darker, or some one may see me; yes, I'm sure I had. I'm glad I thought of that. And yet I dare not trust myself to remain. Daren't I? I think I'd better stop and see if I dare: I'm sure of it. I'm glad I thought of that. He *is* a coward who's afraid of himself! Hallo! what's that? Here she comes with savage! curse him! But I *will* see her! (*gets up into tree.*)

[*Enter* SAVAGE *and* DOLLY.

SAVAGE. Oh, I hate London; In fact I'd rather be most foully murdered in the country than die in the softest feather bed in Whitechapel.

DOLLY. So would I.

SAVAGE. I can't think how anybody can sleep in London! I couldn't. But I did pitch into the Hotel Keeper next morning. "Now," I said, "Mr. Jones, you know I bargained for a whole bed to myself!" "Well, Sir," said he, "You had it." But I hadn't. Certainly, when I turned down the sheets, it did seem empty; but before I'd been in it ten minutes, I found I was not the only inhabitant—or the oldest. You should have seen me next day! You'd have taken me for a walking nutmeg grater!

DOLLY. Ha, ha, ha! I should have laughed.

SAVAGE. That's the best of you! You do enjoy a joke! If I had told this to Ethel, she would have screamed and cried—"Horrid! Dirty fellow! Hold your tongue, do!" She has such a genteel stomach.

Dolly, I've brought you a book of Poetry from London: here it is.

DOLLY. Oh, thank you, Bell; you are kind.

SAVAGE. But before I give you this book you must promise me one thing.

DOLLY. What?

SAVAGE. That you'll never open it.

DOLLY. Never open it! Why not?

SAVAGE. Because—because there's an unmarried Mormon inside.

DOLLY. Not alive?

SAVAGE. This author's works are not thought anything of inside: they are only admired for the elegance of their bindings. I came away in a hurry————

DOLLY. Yes, why did you come home so soon?

SAVAGE. Well, I came home because—because I fell in love with a girl at the Theatre.

DOLLY. Bell!

SAVAGE. Fact! I could feel it coming on. She *was* a beauty! her hair looked like a birch broom in a fit. Dolly, would you like to know why I fell in love with her, eh?

DOLLY. I don't care! Well, yes, I should.

SAVAGE. Because, Dolly, she was so exactly like you. The very image of you! in fact, I could swear you were her.

DOLLY. I'm quite sure I'm only her image.

SAVAGE. So, although I'd set my heart on going to the Polytechnic, I left next morning by the early train.

DOLLY. That *was* good of you!

SAVAGE. D'ye think so, Dolly! Now say you will?

DOLLY. Will what?

SAVAGE. Why, marry me, of course. Now say you will? You know I love you: what's the finest sow to me, if half of her doesn't belong to you? Oh, I love you as much—as much—as much as a hungry bull loves a hay stack! Now say you will?

DOLLY. I will. (*He embraces her*). Oh! I am so happy, I must have a good cry! (*Bursts into tears*).

SAVAGE. Do. Hallo! here comes your Aunt! stand behind that bush.

(*She does so*).

[*Enter* MISS MERRIKIN *and* MEANWELL.

MISS M. (*aside to him*). There sits our Benedict. (*Aloud*) Pray stand here a moment: this walk is far from the house, so we can talk in secret. (*Aside to him*). Speak loudly.

MERRIKIN. So you say, Ethel really loves Mr. Savage.

MISS M. Devotedly! and she daily expects him to propose.

MERRIKIN. Indeed, Betsy, that man would be a brute who could withstand the charms of such a lady.

MISS M. And Savage is a very good fellow: perhaps not very demonstrative or communicative, but none the worse for that.

MERRIKIN. Not at all. Men and women are like carts and wagons; the less they have in them, the more noise they make.

MISS M. (*aside to him*). Say something about the wedding.

MERRIKIN. Pray, when is the wedding likely to take place?

MISS M. We hope in the Spring; but—(*bell rings*) Prayers!

[*Exeunt talking.*

[DOLLY *comes forward slowly, as does* SAVAGE; *they embrace in silence.*

SAVAGE (*after a pause*). Now, if you were a man, you'd hear me swear.

DOLLY. Pray don't mind me.

SAVAGE. Thank you, then I think I will say– dam. Oh! I shall hang myself!

DOLLY. Bell, dear!

SAVAGE. Don't call me dear! or I'll do it now. I shall blow my brains out.

DOLLY. Bell!

SAVAGE. I shall! I know I shall!

DOLLY. Don't say such dreadful things,—then I'll kiss you. (*She kisses him*). I'm surprised at you!—look at me!—I bear it like a man.

SAVAGE. Well—how—how would you like to be done out of the girl you love!

DOLLY. Perhaps it is not true.

SAVAGE. Oh, yes, it is! I know it is.

DOLLY. How do you know?

SAVAGE. I'll tell you. When I told Ethel I loved you, she was struck all of a heap:—I thought there was something wrong.

DOLLY. We have been too hasty. You are, to all intents and purposes, engaged to Ethel.

SAVAGE. I made sure that was off long ago.

DOLLY. I thought so, too:—but you see we were wrong.

SAVAGE. I wish to goodness, I never had fallen in love with you! I'll not have her,—that's flat!

DOLLY. Oh! You must. I beseech you to marry her, for love of me?

SAVAGE. No, No! I won't marry her!—not even to save you the infliction of having me!

DOLLY. It is my duty to make this sacrifice for Ethel.

SAVAGE. If you like being sacrificed,—I don't.

DOLLY. I owe all to her. You know, Mr. Evomy sent me to the workhouse, because, because I had red hair.

SAVAGE. Mrs. Evomy,—a rare tyrant—had red hair.

DOLLY. And it was only when Ethel wept so bitterly, and begged so hard that she might keep me for a doll, to wash and dress me every day, that he consented to adopt me. This is the return I'm called upon to make for all her goodness. You *must* have her, Bell! Now say you will? I said 'I will,'—now you must!—do!—for my sake.

SAVAGE (*with great effort*). I will. Dolly!

DOLLY (*going*). Ye-es.

SAVAGE. Now *you're* crying.

DOLLY. No, I'm not, Bell:—but the tears will come. Good-bye! (*going*).

SAVAGE. Dolly!

DOLLY. Yes.

SAVAGE. I shall hang myself.

DOLLY. Bell!

SAVAGE. Then I shall drown myself.

DOLLY. No, Bell!

SAVAGE. Well then I shall cut my throat.

DOLLY (*going to him*). If you'll faithfully promise not to hang yourself—or drown yourself—or cut your throat,—I'll kiss you.

SAVAGE. All right. (*She kisses him*).

DOLLY. But you *must* break yourself of this habit of kissing me:—it will soon be wicked.

SAVAGE. It can't be wicked to save a fellow-creature from suicide.

[*Exit* DOLLY.

I fear the sight of her will always fill me with the desire to make away with myself. This makes two girls a-dieing of love for me in this one parish. It's flattering, but it's one too many for one man. And we are to be married in the Spring. I *do* hope we shall have a long winter. Well, I don't despair. Look what luck Jim Simpkins had!—why, at the end of twelve months, his first wife was dead and buried. [*Exit.*

[*Enter* SMART *and* POBJOY.

SMART. Pobjoy, were you ever in love?

POBJOY. Never. If I had been, I should now be either married, or dead.

SMART. A nature so impressionable cannot have escaped the gentle passion. You *are* in love! Fall in love like a fool,—and confess it, like a man.

POBJOY. Well, I *am* in love.

SMART. It's a dreadful complaint.

POBJOY. Awful! It is one of the ills that flesh is heir to.

SMART. And it's an ill that nearly all flesh lives to inherit. I railed at matrimony—till I met a certain sweet girl.

POBJOY. Sir, a man who is unwed at forty, is a brute.

SMART. He is!—and the only punishment bad enough for him would be to compel him to marry *two* women. Don't you feel you will die in her presence?

POBJOY. Yes,—and that I cannot live out of her sight.

SMART. Miserable state to be in! We must be resigned. We cannot complain with any enthusiasm. Providence is a magnificent handicapper, and gives to no man a greater weight than he can carry. Does she reciprocate?

POBJOY. She does. And yours?

SMART. Thinks me the finest fellow on earth. Who is she?

POBJOY. I have vowed never to tell. May I ask her name.

SMART. I have taken the same oath as yourself. But let us write their names down,—that will not be telling.

POBJOY. Very good. (*They write in their pocket-books, then tear the leaves out and exchange them.*)

SMART. } (*read*)—Dolly!
POBJOY }

POBJOY (*aside*). She is fooling me! the little jade!

SMART. You—you—you don't mean Dolly Evomy?

POBJOY (*forcing a laugh*).—Ha, ha, ha! No! I'm only joking: I knew you were in love with her, so I thought I would give you a fright,—ha, ha, ha! Good luck to you. [*Exit.*

SMART. Disgusting! Let me console myself by reading my immortal poem. (*Takes out paper.*) First verse:—(*reads*)

I never met a fair young belle—
Be she Conny, Fan, or Carry,
But when I came to know her well,
And love her, she was sure to marry!

At once original and pathetic:—a lasting monument of my splendid genius. Yet they all laugh at it!—but no man ever becomes famous if his friends can possibly prevent him. It all helps to make an interesting biography. How annoyed they were to hear I had sold most of my works! but their sorrow would have been turned into joy if I told them the price,—twelve shillings per hundredweight! oh, this Temple of Fame! How many years has a man to wait outside before the doors open!—and when they are set a-jar by the critics who stand behind—what a crush to get in! And when he does get in,—he finds the

best seats already filled!—so has to content himself with a back seat in the gallery. Occasionally, posterity takes pity on some poor fellow who has been dead a hundred years,—fetches him down from the gallery, and gives him a seat in the stalls! Let me think over my essay to prove that no man has ever seen the devil.——(GILTSPUR *drops down out of tree in a doubled-up position, and with a loud groan*)—the devil himself! (*Screams, and runs off*).

GILT. (*limping about, and rubbing his legs*). Oh! curse this cramp! oh!—my leg! oh! I shall never walk again! oh! ha! ha!—that's a new idea,—the devil coming down from above! oh—this cramp! Was ever the like!—am I sane! by jove! this is a perfect Clapham Junction of love! That wicked old woman!—and that old liar Merrikin!—nicely I've caught 'em! (*looking off.*) Who's this! hang me, if I do any more climbing to-night! By jove! it is Ethel!—No! Yes! Yes, 'tis she!—the very shawl she wore when last we walked together! By jove, I'll not let this opportunity slip—and damn old Evomy.

[*Enter* MISS MEANWELL; *she sits on bench*; *she wears a shawl of a striking pattern, and a veil.*

Ahem! Fear not, dearest girl!—'tis only I! (*goes and sits beside her, and takes her hand.*)—Hush! my sweet angel!—not a word!—I must not be found here.

[*Enter* MERRIKIN, *quietly, he stands behind bush.*

Dearest girl!—you love me!—ah, that gentle pressure answers yes! Let us be true to each other, and fear no one!—above all do not be forced into a union with that man whom, I know, you dislike!—If you are, you will make three people miserable for life!—for it would be as impossible for him to be happy with a woman who loves him not—as for me to live without you I love! oh, think of this, sweet girl, and be firm! I must go! not a word of this to any one!—Till we meet again, my soul's within you!—farewell! dear angel!—pulse of my heart! (*Kisses her hand, then exit cautiously*).

MERRIKIN (*coming forward*). The roughest ruffian—and the most villianous villian who ever wore green spectacles.

MISS M. Oh, Merrikin!—if you could only make love like that.

MERRIKIN. The scoundrel !—the deceitful blackguard !

MISS M. Did you hear him call me "sweetest girl!"—"dearest girl!" "angel!"—"pulse of his heart!"—really, he's very genteel !

MERRIKIN. Now—now, my love,—don't talk so !—or—or you'll send all the blood to my head !

MISS M. Seriously, I never thought his wickedness would go so far so soon !—it is shocking ! Whatever shall we do ?

MERRIKIN. You will catch cold :- here, I have brought your cloak.

MISS M. What a thoughtful man ! (*She puts a long cloak on*).

MERRIKIN. (*looking off*) Bless me, what's this stir about !

[*Enter* SAVAGE, *followed by servants carrying weapons and lanthorns.*

SAVAGE. You'd best go in doors—the pair of you !—there are thieves on the place again ! (*The servants look about, behind bushes, &c.*)

MISS M. } What !—thieves
MERRIKIN }

SAVAGE. Yes !—they've frightened Smart out of his life !—and it was in this very place he saw them! —and Mr. Evomy's gone to Birmingham.

MISS M. Hold me, Merrikin ! (*he supports her to bench*).

SAVAGE. (*look off*)—Hollo !—d'ye see that shadow of a man ?

1ST SERVT. Yes, Sir !—he's in the kitchen garden.

SAVAGE. Now, you fellows !—steady !—quietly !—we'll have 'em !—this way. (*Exit, followed by servants*).

MISS M. Oh ! I'm in a cold heat.

MERRIKIN. And—and it's sent all the blood to my head.

MISS M. You must carry me in !—I'm paralyzed with fright ! Carry me in at once, I say.

MERRIKIN. My love !—im—impossible !—I'll stop and die with you !—but carry you !—oh, impossible.

MISS M. Then go and fetch a gun !—run !—I'm not afraid to be left !—go and get a gun, I say.

MERRIKIN. Get a gun !—oh, if you wish it. (*going*)

Miss M. But be sure it's not loaded.

[*Exit* MERRIKIN.

Oh, I'm terribly alarmed, as Aunt George used to say! What's that!—running this way—gracious! it must be the thief! (*Rises*) He comes!—Heaven help me!—my eyes swim!—I grow dizzy!—courage, courage.

[*Enter* GILTSPUR, *running and looking back:* MISS M. *throws herself upon him with a loud shriek.*

GILT. Miss Meanwell!—fainted!—her hands are tight! I can't loose 'em,—by jove. I'm caught.

[*Enter* SAVAGE, *followed by servants:—they cheer.*

SAVAGE (*taking* GILTSPUR *by the collar.*) Now you scoundrel—who are you?—A light this way!

SERVANTS. Jock! Jock! a light, a light.

[*Enter a boy with a lanthorn.*

SAVAGE (*seising lanthorn, and holding up to* GILTSPUR'S *face.*) Giltspur!

[*Tableau.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*The same as Act I.*

[*Enter* GILTSPUR *and* SAVAGE *followed by Servant.*

SERVANT *(placing chairs)*. Mr. Evomy will see you directly, sir.

[*Exit.*

GILT. Here is his answer to my note. *(Hands letter.)*

SAVAGE *(reads)*. "Dear Sir,—Your letter to hand. Be good enough to give me a call, and oblige your obedient servant, Ichabod Evomy." That looks well. You may depend, Ethel has told him she *will* have you, so he thinks it best to give in.

GILT. I suppose so. What odd blunders we have made! Fancy my thinking you and Smart were talking facts—instead of fiction!

SAVAGE. But that plot of old Meanwell's to part Dolly and I, beats all. What a lucky thing you were in the tree, and overheard them!

GILT. Yes, you ought to be much obliged to this sweet little cherub who sat up aloft! Now let me thoroughly understand:—What did you do after I left?

SAVAGE. So soon as you were gone, I had the beauteous Betsey carried into the house. Arrived there, I simply said, I found her in that state.

GILT. You did not mention my name?

SAVAGE. No. I said nothing about you,—as we agreed.

GILT. Then they do not know that *I* was the supposed thief?

SAVAGE. No; they have not the slightest idea of such a thing:—they firmly believe the premises *were* invaded:—in fact, Smart takes his bible oath the man attacked him;—and they all believe him.

GILT. Ha, ha! his powers of invention are so great, that it is with the greatest difficulty he ever speaks the truth! What did the old girl say?

SAVAGE. When she came to herself, she said that hearing the thief coming she rose to her feet, and with one of those unexpected bursts of courage women often display in cases of emergency, she threw herself upon the man as he rushed past. She then became insensible, and remembers no more till she found herself in the house.

GILT. Ha, ha! poor old woman! How was her story received?

SAVAGE. With laughter! No one believed her. This put her in a pet, so she went off to bed, promising to tell them something still more astonishing to-day.

GILT. Ha, ha! How about the servants?

SAVAGE. I bullied and bribed—till they know nothing!—trust them. How I long to take my darling in my arms, and impart to her the pleasing intelligence that her aunt is an infernal old liar! Was there ever such a pair?

GILT. I must say, for sheer, downright impudence, they are only equalled by an ugly woman setting-up for a————here comes Evomy.

SAVAGE. Ha, ha! I'll wait for you in the Billiard room. [*Exit*, R.

Enter EVOMY, L.

EVOMY. Good morning, Sir.

GILT. Good morning, Sir. (*A pause*).

EVOMY. I received your note, and from it I understand you took that shoe for love of my daughter. (GILT. *bows*). Why the devil did'nt you say so, Sir?

GILT. You would not allow me to explain: you stormed and raved as if your only ambition was to be taken for a madman.

EVOMY. Well, well! My time and my temper are very short: I'm a plain, matter-of-fact man. I never call a Navvy an Excavator, or Red Ink Scarlet Writing Fluid. I don't understand nonsense of this kind. I met my wife one day—I proposed on the next—and we were married on the third—(*aside*)—and I never forgave myself till she died!—(*to him*)—I am quite sure I should never have thought of showing my love for her by walking off with her clothes.

GILT. I perceive the justice of your remarks. (*aside*) Ahem! I'm sure I deeply regret this unpleasantness; I'm convinced you are a man full of the milk of human kindness, but your temper is so hot that it often turns the milk sour.

EVOMY. Perhaps so! Come into my study, Captain, and we'll talk matters over. [*Exeunt.*

[*Enter* DOLLY.

DOLLY. How wretched I am! And yet I deserve all this misery for treating Pobjoy so ill. I really must ask his pardon. This morning he follows me everywhere, but I dread to meet him. I cannot look into his face and listen to his compliments. Oh, dear! here he comes again!

POBJOY (*aside.*) Poor foundling! she has inherited the hard heart of her unknown father, but I will not spare her. (*to her.*) Yesterday, when I suggested that you and I should marry each other, you were kind enough to refer me to Mr. Evomy. I have not spoken to him upon the subject,—for—for to tell you the truth, I have come to the conclusion you will not suit me.

DOLLY. Sir!

POBJOY. I do not wish to pain you, but I *must* be candid. You—you are not exactly what I should wish for in a wife.

DOLLY. What do you mean, sir?

POBJOY. Honestly, I believe you would not make a good wife. Certainly, you have every charm to captivate the eye; but you sadly lack those sterling qualities which win the soul. You are too flighty—too fast—too (Dolly *bursts into tears*) what! (*seizing her hand*) then, Dolly, do you *really* love me?

DOLLY. N—n—no, Mr. Pobjoy! (*he drops her hand, and walks away*) I—I don't. I—I—I love Mr. Savage: and—and that's why I—I'm so sorry—so grieved,—that-that I've encouraged you to think—to think—

POBJOY. Oh, you've not encouraged me to think.

DOLLY. It was wrong, very wicked of me,—can you forgive me?—oh, please do?

POBJOY (*patronisingly.*) I have nothing to forgive, I don't love you, never did, never shall. I'm very sorry you take it so seriously; I'm sure I meant nothing but a little foolish flirtation. I hope you'll be happy with Mr. Savage.

DOLLY. He, he, can't marry me.

POBJOY. What?

DOLLY. He, he, he's engaged to another.

POBJOY (*seizing her hand*) oh, then Dolly! may I hope that you will yet become my wife?—oh, say I may! for I love you passionately, fondly, with all my soul.

DOLLY. You said you did'nt.

POBJOY. I'm a liar!—a dreadful liar! never believe a word I say! oh, marry me, and teach me to speak the truth!

DOLLY. But I'm sure you don't love me.

POBJOY. I swear I do, with all my heart! I came into this room despising you heartily—at least, I thought so. But directly you began to cry, I again began to love; and, and by the time you'd done crying, I loved you more than ever! oh, promise you will have me?

DOLLY. Well, Mr. Pobjoy, all I can possibly say is that, if Mr. Savage is unable to accept my hand, you shall have the next refusal of it. Shake hands, Mr. Pobjoy.

POBJOY. Thank you, Miss Dolly. (*feeling in pocket*) Miss Dolly, take, take a piece of Bronchial Troches? (*offers box*).

DOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Pobjoy.

POBJOY. Take another, Miss Dolly.

DOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Pobjoy.

POBJOY. Take the whole box, Miss Dolly.

DOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Pobjoy. (*Exit Pobjoy.*) How odd! I cried from sheer vexation at the thought of his hating me after all the trouble I've been at to make him—but, no! I *must* give up this flirting! I really *will* turn serious, and take to distributing tracts! There's Ethel hates me; and cannot disguise it! What am I to do?

[*Enter* ETHEL.

ETHEL. Why, are you crying ?

DOLLY. Because I'm sure you are unhappy.

ETHEL. Thank you. But if I am, *you* made me so.

DOLLY. Oh, Ethel ! it is impossible to hide it any longer ! we are rivals.

ETHEL. How is it we are such ? I love him as much as you do : they say my face is as handsome as yours. I have fortune, you have none ; not even a name ! But for me, instead of your standing here looking so clean, and white, and pretty ; you would now be on your knees, with hands as red as the bricks you scrubbed ! I made you a lady ; I polished you into an idol for man to worship ; all this I've done for you—and, as it's proved, for him : What is my reward ? You rob me of the only thing on earth my money cannot buy !

DOLLY. There is nothing I can more easily bear than the taunts of those I despise ; but now those I love turn upon me, the blush of shame and of sorrow is brought to my cheek. (*a pause*).

ETHEL. Oh, forgive me ? forgive me ? but I *do* hate you ! I cannot help it ! oh, my dolly !—my child, my friend and sister, I shall never love you any more ! My heart has gone mad, and now I hate those I once loved ! But no ! I will not be so vile ! I will forgive you ! I will bless you, I will bless him, and die. Let me kiss you, let me kiss you once more, let me kiss you for the last time. (*They embrace, and stand apart in tears*).

[*Enter* SAVAGE *and* GILTSPUR *at back*, SAVAGE *steals up behind* DOLLY, *and embraces her ;* GILTSPUR *does the same with* ETHEL.

SAVAGE (*aside to* DOLLY). Your Aunt is an old liar !

DOLLY. Oh, I'm so glad !

[*Enter* EVOMY.

EVOMY. Ha, ha, ha ! my soul and my body ! Girls, a husband a piece for you ! ha, ha, ha ! my soul and my body !

[*Enter* POBJOY *and* MISS MEANWELL, *they stand aghast.*

Ha, ha, ha, Betsey, what do you think of this ? pretty sight, eh ? wou'nt you like to be one of 'em ? ha, ha, ha !

MISS M. This is outrageous, as Aunt George used to say! Ichabod! blood is thicker than water!

EVOMY. Ha, ha, ha!—my soul and body, I hope so!

MISS M. Ichabod! do you believe in morality? can you stand by, and see your daughter in the arms of that villian? If *you* can, I will not! (*runs across, and drags* Ethel, *in a fainting state, from* GILTSPUR. *To* GILTSPUR)—You, you, you slubberdegullion!

GILT. I've not a dictionary with me, but judging from your tone, I should say slubber, slubberdesomething is a term of reproach. Why is this thus?

MISS M. How can you stand there, and ask such a question with all the unblushing innocence of infancy? Villian!

EVOMY. Hollo! My soul and my body! Betsey! Captain, what does this mean?

GILT. I do not know, sir; I am in the clouds.

MISS M. I wish you were!

EVOMY. Betsey, why do you wish the gentleman up in a balloon? it is not sociable on your part.

MISS M. Villian! scoundrel! concentrated essence of Satan!

EVOMY. Stop, stop, stop! Why, Betsey, you'd make a good Attorney-General.

MISS M. Hold me! hold me, some one! or I shall strike him! (SAVAGE *runs to her, and holds her on his knee*).

GILT. Madam, your language is coarse, and your meaning obscure.

EVOMY. My soul and my body! I'll not have my house turned into a bear-garden! Betsey, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Why, sister, you should never let your angry passions rise, our little tongues were never made to damn each others eyes!—Doctor Watts. Ah, Captain, so like my poor, dear wife! But, what's the cause?

MISS M. Ichabod, you fail to comprehend the gravity of the situation. This man [*Enter* MERRIKIN. seeks to marry your daughter; he professes to love her, but he does not.

GILT. (*fiercely*) A lie ! I, I ask your pardon, madam ?

MISS M. It is the truth ; for, to prove this man, and save your child a life of wretchedness and woe, I have become her rival ; he has fallen into the trap ! for with the smallest encouragement on my part, he greedly snapt at my greater fortune, while his lying lips did swear a love for me, his bullet of a heart can feel for no one !

EVOMY. What, what ! sir, what have you to say to this !

GILT. I don't understand what she means.

EVOMY. The charge seems plain enough. She accuses you of having offered her marriage ; am I right ?

MISS M. Yes.

GILT. Then, madan, *you* are wrong ; at any rate, it's the first I've heard of it.

MISS M. It will not be the last.

MERRIKIN. What your sister has said is perfectly true. I was an unseen spectator of that man's baseness.

GILT. Good heavens ! this is going to far. Mr. Evomy, every word of this is false ! I deny it in toto ! it is a most vile plot to ruin an honest man ! Pity or blame them ; for they are mad, or lie. Marry *you*, madam ! Sir, the only woman to whom I ever thought of making such a proposal is your daughter.

EVOMY. My soul and my body !——

SAVAGE. Here, this has gone far enough : It's all a mistake.

EVOMY. How do you know that ?

SAVAGE. Because, sir, I myself saw your sister in Giltspur's arms.———

EVOMY
MERRIKIN } What !

MISS M. (*bursting into tears*). Oh, you infamous man ! if Justice could take the band from off her eyes, and see this wrong, she soon would hurl her scales at your head !

SAVAGE. It's a fact ! I tell you, I saw them ! (*aside*) Hang me ! if I *don't pay* 'em out now !

MERRIKIN. Impossible ! where did you find them ?

SAVAGE. In the shrubbery.

EVOMY. In the shrubbery ! Good heavens !

MERRIKIN. Oh, you infamous woman ! (*They walk about in a rage*).

SAVAGE. I don't want to make mischief, but they were in a very secluded part of the shrubbery.

EVOMY. My soul and my body ! this *is* a disgrace.

MERRIKIN. Terrible ! (*to* GILT) How can you survive it, villian.

GILT. It was Miss Meanwell's fault.

EVOMY. What ! lay the blame on the woman ? You mean snob of a son of Adam !

GILT. I couldn't help myself.

MERRIKIN. How did Joseph help *himself*, sir ? Is that woman more beautiful than the wife of Potiphar ?

GILT. I can't say, I never saw Mrs. Potiphar, that I know of.

EVOMY. It's dreadful ! It must go no further, we *must* hush it up.

SAVAGE. Impossible ! the servants know of it.

EVOMY. } The servants know of it ! damnation !
MERRIKIN }

SAVAGE. I don't want to make mischief, but the fact is, the servants were the first to discover 'em.

EVOMY. Worse and worse ! dreadful ! terrible !

GILT. If you'll whisper less loudly, I'll give you the particulars.

EVOMY. The particulars ! you unmitigated blackguard.

MERRIKIN. You thorough-paced scoundrel !

GILT. Really, if there is so much noise about nothing, I shall open the window.

EVOMY. Nothing ! you call it nothing, sir ?

GILT. I consider being taken for a thief nothing of much importance.

EVOMY. } Being taken for a thief ! what do you mean ?
MERRIKIN }

GILT. If you can keep clean tongues in your mouths for two minutes, I'll tell you. Miss Meanwell threw her arms around my neck, and hugged me to her bosom, because she thought I was a thief.

EVOMY. Then, were *you* the robber that caused all this hubbub ?

SAVAGE. He was.

GILT. Nothing to make such a noise about !

MISS M. I don't like such jokes, it's going too far. Savage ! you're a disgrace.

SAVAGE. Well, mum, you shouldn't say that Ethel was in love with me ; as the opportunity offered, I determined to have my revenge.

MISS M. And Giltspur is quite as bad ! Pray, what fun could there be in your making love to me last night ?

GILT. My dear madam, I never did any such thing.

MERRIKIN. But you *did*, sir ! I saw you. I'm like Miss Meanwell, I don't like such jokes.

GILT. I assure you, the only *sensible* woman to whom I spoke last night was this lady. (*takes* Ethel's *hand*).

ETHEL. I ! I am not the moon, so cannot be seen in two places at one time !

DOLLY. She never left her room last night !

GILT. Nonsense ! You wore that peculiar shawl of yours, that one with the crests and arms on it.

MISS M. I wore that last night ! (*They all burst out laughing, except* GILT. *and* MISS M., *who stood looking at each other*).

EVOMY. Ha, ha, ha ! Was it like clasping your arms round the trunk of a tree ? Ha, ha, ha !

GILT. Unfortunately, I did not embrace the lady !

SAVAGE. Unfortunately ! ha, ha, ha !

GILT. Yes ! for had I done so, I should at once have discovered my mistake. So, madam, no sooner had you taken me for a lover than you took me for a thief ! Well, you are a very brave lady ;—indeed, it is difficult to say in which instance you displayed the most courage !

EVOMY. Hush! hush! here comes Smart! We'll have some fun with him.

OMNES. Yes, Yes! let us chaff him well.

[*Enter* SMART, *with his arm in a sling.*

EVOMY. Smart, my dear fellow, how do you feel this morning?

SMART. Thank you, sir, very so-so, system terribly shaken. (*They hand him chair, salts, &c.*)

EVOMY. Now pray tell us all about it.

SMART. Well, I went into the shrubbery to compose a preface to a book I am thinking of writing. I was seated quietly, when, suddenly, I felt a dreadful blow on the head! I jumped up, looked around, and there stood a hugh specimen of humanity, of undoubted Whitechapel breed. Of course I rushed at him, and knocked him down, when, I am sorry to say, he began to swear horribly.

EVOMY. Smart! you are a hero! (*Shake hands*).

SMART. Oh! gently, sir! gently, if you please,—my arm.

ETHEL. I hope you're not much hurt?

SMART. Oh, no, thanks! a mere nothing! broken in sixteen places, that's all.

THE WOMEN. Oh, how dreadful! how brave of you, Mr. Smart! how very brave!

DOLLY. I'm sure you look white! (*Thrusts smelling bottle suddenly to his nose, which makes him loose his breath*). You shouldn't snuff-up so much.

MERRIKIN. How nice to be brave, and be praised by the fair!

GILT. Yes, egad! some day when I've courage enough, I'll be brave.

EVOMY. Smart, you've quite astonished us by coming out so! To be frank, I had an idea that you were a man who talked like a lion, but acted like a lamb.

SMART. Sir, you insult me! Treat me fairly, and I'm the gentlest creature on earth; but attempt to put upon me, and I become very dangerous, very dangerous.

EVOMY. So it seems.

SMART. Oh, my arm ! it's awful ! it hurts if you only look at it !

OMNES. Poor fellow.

MISS M. Last night you said something about firearms.

SMART. Did I ? Did I ? (*aside*) I'd no idea I was such a terrible liar. (*aloud*) Oh, yes ! yes ! quite right, there were firearms.

EVOMY. Indeed ! shocking ! pray give us the particulars.

SMART (*aside*) Hang their inquisitiveness ! (*aloud*) Well, you must know that—that when—when he had me down, and—and while he was sitting on my chest, I—I ventured to expostulate with him on the folly of his conduct. "Now—now, my good man," I said, "you must own you've got the worst of it." No, no sooner had I said this, than the ungrateful rascal pulled out a sort of pistol kind of gun, and—and said he'd stab me.

ETHEL. Shocking !

MISS M. Dreadful !

DOLLY. Horrid man.

EVOMY. My dear fellow, I admire your courage, and am delighted to tell you the vagabond has been arrested.

SMART. What ? a—a man arrested ?

EVOMY. Yes.

SMART. Goo—good heavens ! why didn't you tell me this before ? He can't be the right man, sir !

EVOMY. Oh, yes, he is, and he will be brought before the magistrates to-morrow ; when, of course, you will have to give your evidence.

SMART. My evidence ! Goo—good gracious ! Sir, I'm *sure* he's not the right man !

EVOMY. That will be proved. I hope he will get five years ; and, after hearing your evidence, I think he will.

SMART. I—I—I really don't agree with you !—in—in fact, I—I—I don't place much confidence in my evidence.

EVOMY. It is as clear as crystal.

SMART (*aside*) I thought it was thick as mud!

SAVAGE. Yes, most conclusive.

MISS M. So thoroughly to the point.

MERRIKIN. Satisfactory in every respect.

ETHEL. And delivered in such an elegant manner.

DOLLY. And in such beautiful language.

GILT. He is safe for five years.

OMNES. Yes! certainly!

SMART. I hope not! oh, I hope not! Sir, pray have the poor fellow released.

EVOMY. Nonsense!

OMNES. Nonsense!

SMART. Do! please do! I forgive him! I do really, with all my heart. Think of his poor wife, of his twins pining in their little cot for their paternal parent, think of his aged mother and his blind father; and remember, perhaps he is an orphan himself!—oh, pray order his release! please do!

EVOMY. I appreciate your kindness of heart, but for the sake of Society —look, sir! you are flourishing your bad arm in the air!

SMART. Never mind my arm! never mind me! but this man, sir!—this poor man! The fact is, on my soul! I—I rather like being assaulted! I do indeed! I—I *enjoy* being knocked down, that's a fact!—in fact, sir—the truth is—on my soul—I've been telling you a parcel of lies!—lies! —nothing but lies!

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha! oh, how brave!—how brave!—ha, ha, ha! (*They mock at him.*)

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